Trains Album of Photographs

NEW YORK CENTRAL RAILROAD

NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM

NUMBER 9

Trains Album of Railroad Photographs

Book 9 NEW YORK CENTRAL RR.

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The practically gradeless main line of the New York Central between New York and Chicago is one of the greatest railroad routes in the world. Counting the West Shore line, this artery of traffic has six mainline tracks nearly all the way from New York to Buffalo, the greatest stretch of six-track railroad in the world; and, counting the Michigan Central line, on to Chicago stretches a line of from four to six tracks.

This trunk, with its roots firmly embedded in the traffic of the Eastern Seaboard at Boston and New York and with its branches spreading into the Midwest to Cairo, Ill., to St. Louis, Peoria, Chicago, and to Mackinaw City, Mich., is the creation of one of the greatest railroad statesmen of all time. For the New York Central basically as it stands today was conceived in the period around 1870 under the spacious beaver hat of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt.

Today the Commodore's creation, with 11,000 route miles, is the largest railroad of the East in point of mileage and second largest in volume of traffic. It carries the largest share of both freight and passengers between Chicago and New York, and its proudest train, the Twentieth Century Limited, has become a synonym for the finest of rail travel wherever travelers congregate. The superbly efficient New York passenger station, Grand Central Terminal, which handles nearly 60 million passengers a year, is truly a part of the Manhattan heritage. New York Central freight tracks, the only ones entering directly upon Manhattan Island, handle about one-third of all freight between Manhattan and the West.

Mechanically the Central is characterized chiefly by the sleek, greyhound lines of its locomotives. The shapely Hudson is one of the best-known passenger-pullers in the world, a marvel of design efficiency. The larger Mohawk, used in both passenger and freight service, has the same general appearance, and some of both classes of engine are now equipped with box-car-huge tenders carrying 43 tons of coal, enough to run through from New York to Chicago with only one coaling stop, at Wayneport, the fast-acting coaling station near Rochester. The NYC's fleet of Diesel switchers is the largest owned by any road, and its electrification in the New York terminals and suburban zone was one of the first extensive mainline projects.

Behind the Mohawks, strings of freight rumble down the green reaches of the Mohawk Valley and across the Alfred E. Smith memorial bridge high above the Hudson, with a cargo far above the national average in percentage of manufactured goods. Passenger trains of 16 and 17 cars roll along the great tangent between Elkhart and Toledo at 80 miles an hour, steady as a church. Heavy trains of southbound iron ore and northbound coal go between the Pittsburgh area and Ashtabula on Lake Erie.

Strung out along the Central are many of the larger cities of the land. The Mohawk and Hudson valleys in New York State are an empire alone. Along Central rails lives 80 per cent of New York State population. Call off the names and you will see what made this consolidation of small railroads such a natural enterprise for the Commodore back in 1869: Albany, Schenectady, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo. Add Chicago, South Bend, Toledo, Cleveland, and Erie—brought into the system with the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern in 1873 — Peoria, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Dayton, Springfield, and Columbus on the old Big Four, Detroit, Jackson, Battle Creek, and Kalamazoo on the Michigan Central, Pittsburgh, Youngstown, and Connellsville on the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, and it is easy to understand the strength of the Central's traffic position.

But for all the economics and all the mechanics, the traveler will longest remember the superb view of the Hudson River. When storm-tossed with whitecaps under a lead-gray sky, it is a majestic sight from the warm comfort of the observation lounge on the Empire State Express. It is ghostlike in early-morning fog from a bedroom on the Twentieth Century. Or, in late afternoon sunshine, from the diner of the Water Level Limited, it is an almost unreal Maxfield Parish canvas of deep purples and blues. This is the ever-changing Hudson which once carried the commerce of an inland empire into New York City. And on both shores are the tracks of the New York Central Railroad, which has become an even greater highway of commerce than the river ever was.

This album is an over-all glimpse, in photos, of the New York Central. In these limited pages there is not sufficient space to show, even briefly, all the ramifications of this large system, but we have selected the photos which we feel best portray the essence of the Central. They are reproduced on special paper by methods which give prints equal to actual photographic enlargements and are bound so any sheets can be removed for framing without damaging the binding.

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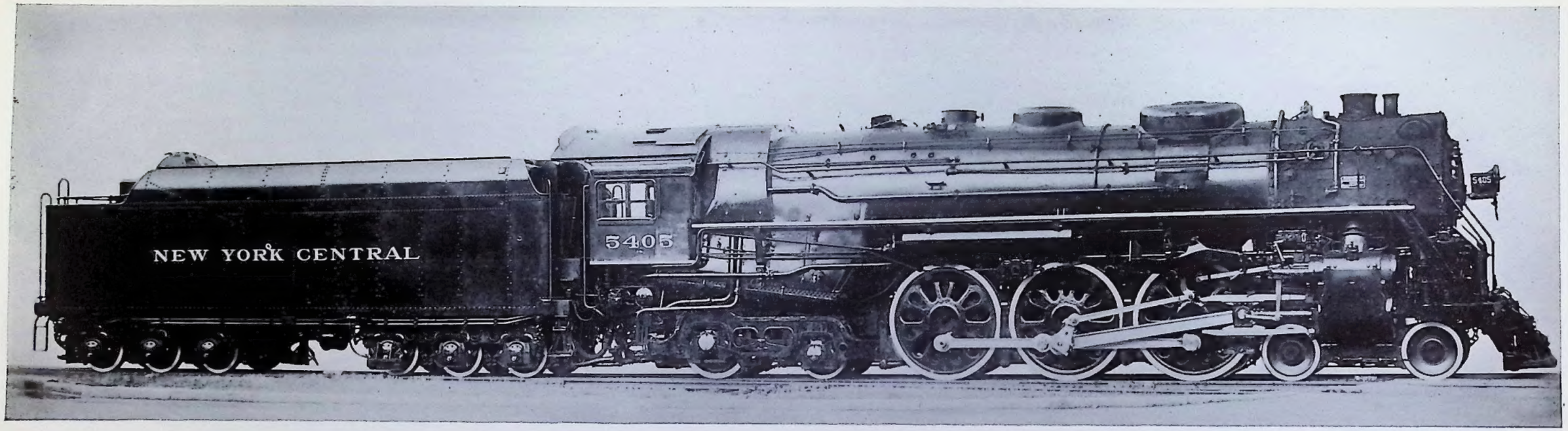
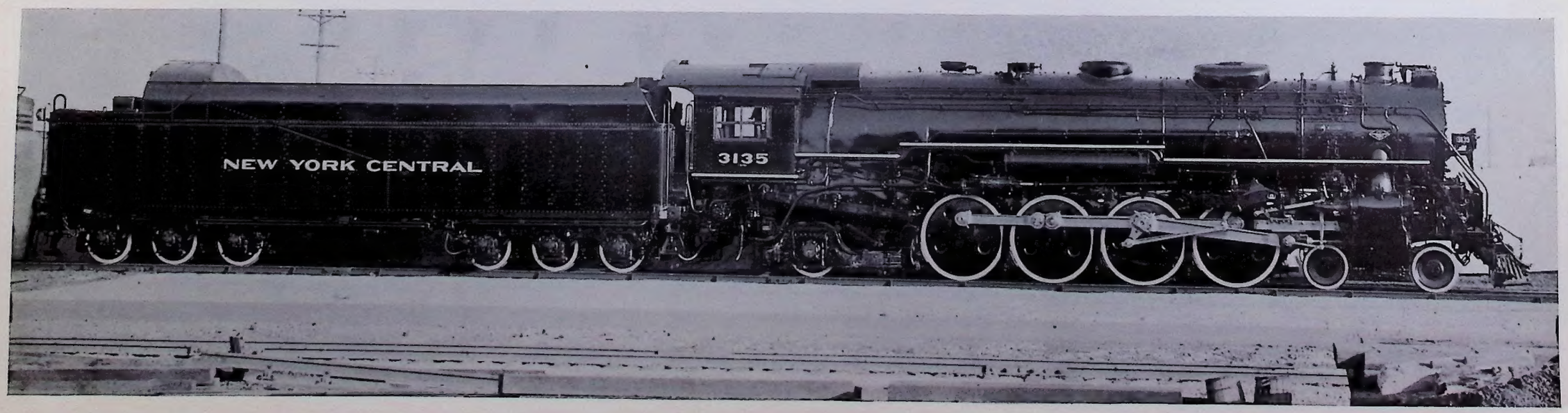
This is the New York Central. Hudson River to one side, bluffs to the other. A Hudson-type locomotive on the front end. Well-kept roadbed, four tracks wide, swinging in wide curves with the shoreline. Scenery and railroad no traveler can forget. By Frank Quin.

Event of the day at Chicago's LaSalle Street Terminal is the departure of the NYC's Twentieth Century Limited for New York. Courtesy New York Central System.



The two most important types of locomotive on the Central are the Hudson (4-6-4 wheel arrangement) and the Mohawk (4-8-2). Here are builder's photos of the latest classes of both types. The bulk of mainline passenger work is handled by the Hudsons, known as the most handsome locomotives in America, and the Mohawks pull most mainline freight as well as some of the heavier passenger trains. Tender below holds 42 tons of coal.

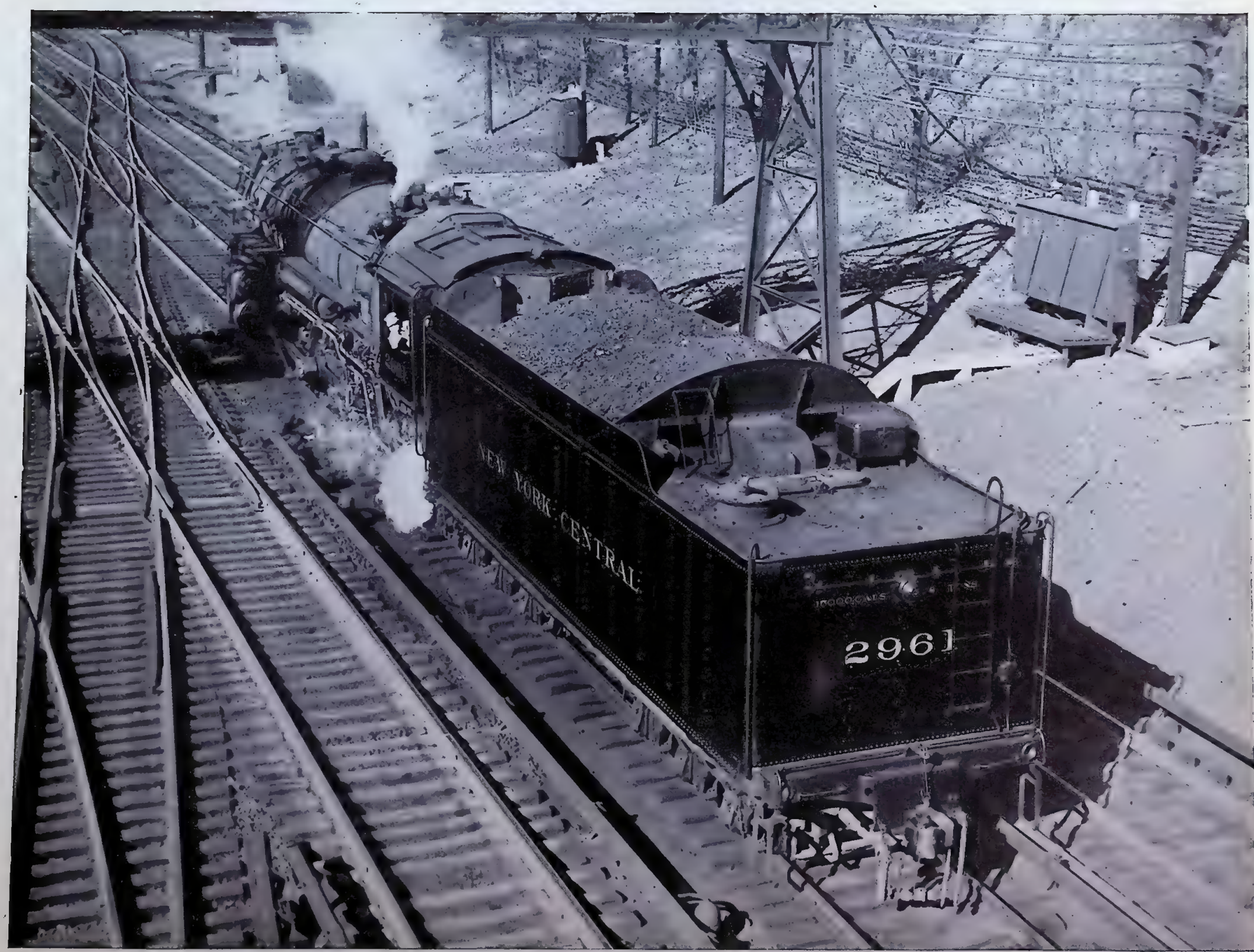


Eastbound train leaving Collinwood, O., in Cleveland's east side at the end of the terminal electrification. The 4-6-6-4 electric has just been exchanged for one of the latest-series Hudsons. By Charles W. Burns.

At left is one of Hudsons specially streamlined for the Empire State Express leaving Troy, N. Y., on its trial run. Empire and Century engines make the Troy run after shopping at West Albany and before returning to their regular assignments. By Eugene Baxter. Above is the eastbound Pacemaker going through Goshen, Ind. The Pacemaker is an all-coach overnight train between Chicago and New York. By Robert C. Schell Jr. Below is a local on the Putnam line. By Frank Quin.

Freight is the lifeblood of a railroad, even of a railroad with as much passenger traffic as the New York Central. An average freight train may well earn several times as much gross revenue per mile as even the most plush and glamorous streamliner. At right is a freight on the Central's Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, using the public street in McKeesport, Pa. By M. B. Cooke. Below, a Berkshire-type locomotive takes a redball refrigerator train into the Boston area on Central's Boston & Albany. By H. W. Pontin, Railroad Photographic Club. The freight at right, below, is near Little Ferry, N. J., on Central's West Shore route. By M. B. Cooke.

Station scenes on the New York Central: Above, Utica, with the Knickerbocker leaving westbound. Upper right, Buffalo, by Adrian Buyse. Lower left, St. Thomas, Ont., and lower right, Detroit, both by A. C. Kalmbach.



At Harmon, N. Y., end of the New York terminal electrified division, this Mohawk-type locomotive is backing off the ladder into the station, ready to take over a train brought up the river from the city by an electric locomotive. By John T. Warren Jr.

Mott Haven, five miles north of Grand Central Terminal at the point where the main line and the Harlem Division divide, is one of the busiest railroad junctions in the world. Here also are the principal coach yards for the New York end of the NYC. The photo shows the diamond at the entrance to Mott Haven Yard. The interlocking tower at extreme left controls the yard traffic, while the long, low, two-story building to the right of the yard tower is the junction interlocking, Tower MO. Courtesy New York Central System.

The aerial view is of Mott Haven coach yards, where trains into and out of Grand Central Terminal are serviced. The smoky scene below once existed in the heart of Manhattan, where the New York Central Building, the Waldorf-Astoria, and other office and hotel buildings now stand. In the background is the old Grand Central Station. The track layout gives a faint idea of the much larger layout, on two levels, which now exists entirely underground beneath the present Grand Central area. Courtesy New York Central.

Leaving the Park Avenue tunnel, outward-bound from Grand Central Terminal. The tunnel portal is at 95th Street. This tunnel was operated by steam before the electrification and Grand Central construction early this century, but at that time the terminal tracks south of the tunnel were in the open. Now everything south of this tunnel portal is underground, including the most extensive terminal track layout in the world. Courtesy New York Central.

On the tracks along the Harlem River north of Manhattan one may see all types of motive power. Here are a few samples: steam, electric, multiple-unit cars, and Diesel - electric. By Bill Baumgarten.

The Mercury leaving Chicago for Detroit. Below, it is shown leaving the Illinois Central lakefront station, and above, at speed in the Hyde Park suburban area, with the IC's electrified suburban tracks in the background. Among the unusual features of regularly assigned Mercury cars are mid-car lounges in coaches and wide, open-ended vestibules which give a very roomy appearance to the space between cars. Above by F. T. Richardson. Below by Robert McKell.

The Mercury is really two distinct train services, both terminating at Detroit but forming a continuous route of streamliners between Chicago and Cleveland. Since this is not a logical through route, most business consists of Cleveland - Toledo - Detroit passengers and Detroit - Chicago passengers. In fact, there is a considerable layover in Detroit in each direction to allow more suitable departure times. Top by A. A. Loomis Jr. Both photos below by Paul Eilenberger.

When the Mercury was inaugurated between Cleveland and Detroit (above), one of the heavy K-5 Pacifics was streamlined for the service. As the service grew in popularity the front-end work was taken over by a streamlined Hudson, and the streamlined K-5, No. 4917, was assigned to local work. It is shown (below, right) on a suburban train out of Chicago. Later it was assigned to the James Whitcomb Riley, streamliner between Chicago and Cincinnati (below, left).

Peekskill, 40 miles north of Grand Central on the main line, is a fine place to watch the New York Central at work. Many suburban trains terminate here, and the heavy mainline traffic keeps things interesting. Photographer Herb Weisberger finds many of his best New York Central photos within walking distance of Peekskill station.

Coming and going. The "Mohawk" just north of Peekskill. Both by Herb Weisberger.

A Mohawk-type Class L-4 locomotive, New York Central's newest and most powerful steam motive power, scoops up water from a track pan on the main line while hustling a trainload of oil at 50 miles per hour.

The New York Express leaves Troy late at night with express and mail for both eastbound and westbound connections on the main line at Albany. By Eugene Baxter.

Engine 862, a predecessor of the famous 999, is shown pulling the Empire State Express between Syracuse and Buffalo in 1891 on one of the train's first runs. At the throttle is Charles Hogan, who two years later established a world's speed record with the 999 on the Empire. On its first runs, four cars—a combination baggage-buffet-smoking car, two new passenger coaches and a new Wagner drawing-room-car—made up the train. Contrast this with the Empire State Express of today, shown on our title page. Courtesy New York Central.